



## DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the  
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

### Building Background Handout

#### Vocabulary Terms

**Abolishing/Abolition:** The act of ending something

**Acquired:** Gotten as one's own

**Arsenal:** A building used for storing weapons

**Artifact:** Any object made by people

**Artisan:** A person who is skilled at making things like furniture, crafts, or pottery

**Ceramics:** Objects made out of baked clay

**Confederacy:** The eleven southern states that seceded from the Union in 1860 and 1861

**Conservation:** The preservation of artifacts for future generations. It involves examining, documenting and treating, if necessary, artifacts to slow their deterioration

**Conservator:** A person who does conservation

**Curator:** A person who takes care of historical objects, usually at a museum

**Elegant:** Fine or rich in quality

**Emancipation:** The act of freeing from constraint or confinement, especially slavery

**Embroidery:** The art of sewing designs on cloth

**Footcandle:** A unit to measure light intensity

**Garrison:** A military fort, or the armies that are located in a fort

**Inscribed:** Written on

**Mythic:** Something from the distant past

**Replica:** An exact copy of an original

**Reproduction:** A copy of something

**Sightline:** A direct line from your eye to the thing you are looking at

**Solvent:** A substance that can dissolve other substances like dirt and oils

**Tactile:** The sense of touch, or an object that can be felt

**Tangible:** Real or capable of being touched

**Textiles:** Fabrics made by weaving or knitting

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.

## People, Places, Dates

**Thomas Jefferson** was the third president of the United States from 1801 to 1809. Jefferson founded the University of Virginia, and wrote the historic Declaration of Independence, the document that boldly told King George that the colonies would no longer accept his rule. He served as the first secretary of state under George Washington, and vice president under John Adams. During his presidency, Jefferson doubled the size of the country by acquiring the Louisiana Purchase.

**Meriwether Lewis and William Clark** led an expedition from Saint Louis to the Oregon coast from 1804 to 1806. Their primary objective was to explore the territory acquired from France in 1803 through the Louisiana Purchase. Lewis and Clark's mission, assigned by President **Thomas Jefferson**, was to explore the land's resources, make contact with Indians, and search for the fabled Northwest Passage, a water route to the Pacific Ocean.

**War of 1812** was a conflict between the United States and Great Britain. During the early 1800s, Great Britain was at war with France. The United States remained neutral and traded freely with both countries. American ships seeking trade with the French were stopped by the British, who dominated the seas. In addition to preventing trade, the British claimed the right to take British sailors off the American ships on which they served. Frequently, the British would also take Americans. During this time, the United States also wanted to claim land in British-held Canada. All of these factors led Congress to declare war on Great Britain on June 18, 1812.

**Battle of Baltimore:** On September 13, 1814, British warships began firing bombs and rockets on **Fort McHenry**, which protected the city of Baltimore—an important seaport. The attack continued for twenty-five hours, but the Americans refused to surrender. The next morning, the British admitted defeat and withdrew their warships. In celebration, soldiers at the fort hoisted a huge American flag. Francis Scott Key, who was aboard a ship several miles away, saw the flag, and was moved to write a song celebrating “that star-spangled banner” as a symbol of America's triumph and endurance.

**George and Louisa Armistead:** Major George Armistead was the commander of **Fort McHenry** during the famous **Battle of Baltimore**, in the **War of 1812**. After the battle, he saved the Star Spangled Banner and gave it to his wife **Louisa**, who passed it down to her daughter Georgiana Armistead Appleton. On her death, it was inherited by her son Eben Appleton, who donated the flag to the Smithsonian in 1912.

**Mary Pickersgill (1776–1857)** was a Baltimore flag-maker. In 1813, Major George Armistead hired Mary Pickersgill to sew a huge flag, thirty feet high and forty-two feet wide, to fly over Fort McHenry. An expert flag maker, Mrs. Pickersgill made flags for many ships. But even she had never made such a large flag. She got help from her thirteen-year-old daughter Caroline; nieces Eliza Young (thirteen) and Margaret Young (fifteen); and a thirteen-year-old African American indentured servant, Grace Wisher.

**John Bull Locomotive, 1831:** The “John Bull” was one of the first successful locomotives in the United States. In 1981, for its 150th anniversary, it was operated for one last time, making it the “oldest operable locomotive” in the United States. The locomotive was named after the character John Bull, England's national symbol, much like America's Uncle Sam.

**David Drake (1801–1870s)** was an enslaved black potter who worked on Lewis Miles' plantation in South Carolina. David Drake is the only slave known to have signed and dated his pots. He was educated by his first owner, stoneware maker and newspaper editor Abner Landrum, and may have worked at Landrum's newspaper. Later on, Dave was sold to Lewis Miles, another large-scale pottery owner. Dave was a master potter, regularly producing massive storage jars and jugs that required enormous skill and strength to make.

### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](https://www.scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.

**Abraham Lincoln** was born in 1809 in a log cabin, but eventually became the sixteenth president of the United States and led America through the Civil War. He is famous for freeing the slaves, saving the Union, and giving thoughtful speeches like the Gettysburg Address. His life ended in 1865 when he was assassinated.

**Fort Sumter:** The nation's bloodiest and most divisive war began at Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 12, 1861. After South Carolina seceded from the Union, the Confederacy demanded that the United States evacuate its fort in Charleston Harbor. Lincoln refused, provoking a Confederate attack.

**William Tecumseh Sherman** was a general in the Union Army. In 1864, he led a march through the South from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Savannah, Georgia. His army burned crops, destroyed buildings, and tore up railroads in an effort to crush the Southern people's will to continue the war.

**Jefferson Davis** was the President of the Confederacy during the Civil War. He went to college at West Point, fought Indians for several years along the frontier and later served with merit in the Mexican War. He had experience in Congress as both a representative and senator, and was secretary of war under President Franklin Pierce.

**Emancipation Proclamation:** On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation dramatically changed the meaning of the Civil War by declaring that all persons held as slaves in America were "thenceforward, and forever free." Because the Emancipation Proclamation did not free slaves in every state, and because some people still questioned whether the Proclamation was legal, President Lincoln became convinced that only a constitutional amendment would permanently guarantee black freedom after the war.

**The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment** to the Constitution completed what the Emancipation Proclamation set in motion. On December 6, 1865, the U.S. government abolished slavery by amending the Constitution to say, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** is one of America's celebrated heroes for his use of peaceful protest strategies during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s.

**REPRODUCIBLE**

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

**[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)**



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.

**DECODING HISTORY STARTS NOW!**

Read this exclusive sneak peek in preparation  
for the virtual field trip.

[www.scholastic.com/decodinghistory](http://www.scholastic.com/decodinghistory)



**CAHILLS vs. VESPERS**

**DAY OF DOOM**

by David Baldacci

Seven members of the Cahill family have been kidnapped, and it's up to thirteen-year-old Dan Cahill and his older sister, Amy, to save them. They have to collect a series of bizarre ransoms from around the world, all while staying a step ahead of their enemies. In this scene, the search takes Amy and Dan to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in search of information on Lewis and Clark. Too bad Isabel Kabra, one of their deadliest rivals, has been there first . . .

For an audio version of this excerpt, please click [HERE](#).



Amy, Dan, and the others climbed into a cab outside of Union Station in DC and headed over to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. It was located on the National Mall. The cab dropped them off on Constitution Avenue and they hurried in. Like almost all museums in DC, the admission was free because all of these facilities were paid for largely with tax dollars and thus open to the country's citizens without charge. The space inside was divided up into themes. The first floor focused on transportation and technology. There was a large early-style locomotive anchoring this floor. The second floor housed exhibitions on American lives and ideals, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture Gallery. The third floor focused on wars and politics, and located here was a large exhibition on the men who have been president of the United States.

Amy and the others paused in the large lobby and gazed around.

"Where do we start looking?" asked Dan.

Atticus said, "It makes the most sense to ask someone who works here. Perhaps there's a permanent Lewis and Clark exhibit."

"Good thinking," said Amy. But she added in a



warning tone, “Be on the lookout for Isabel Kabra. And I doubt she’ll be traveling alone, so keep watch for her bodyguards, too.”

They headed over to the information desk and were told that there was a Lewis and Clark display on the third floor. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, both veteran soldiers, had been commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson to explore the Northwest Territory that the United States had acquired from France as part of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. Their journey led them all the way to the Pacific coast. Early on in the trip, Lewis and Clark were joined by a Shoshone Indian named Sacagawea. She helped guide the expedition westward over the Rocky Mountains. It had been the longest, most arduous expedition ever undertaken in America, and both Lewis and Clark became revered as two of the country’s greatest heroes.

They took the stairs up to the third floor and quickly found the display area. Items from the legendary expedition were under glass, and there were information cards under every item, explaining what they were and how each had been used by the two famous explorers. However, after twenty minutes of examining all of the items, Amy and the others were no further along in their quest.

Dan said, “If there’s something helpful here, I don’t see it. I hope this wasn’t a huge waste of time. We could have been halfway to the West Coast by now.”

Atticus said firmly, “My mother was dying at

the time. I doubt she would have told me *useless* information."

Dan paled and said, "Hey, Att, I didn't mean it like that. But she could have been delirious."

"No, she wasn't," said Atticus emphatically. "She knew exactly what she was doing. I'm sure of it."

Jake added, "And Isabel Kabra is in town, too."

Amy said, "But we don't know that she actually came here. As you said, DC is a big city. We just speculated it was to look at something pertaining to Lewis and Clark." She added in a hollow voice, "Well, I speculated."

While they had been talking, a woman had walked over to them.

"Lot of interest in Lewis and Clark today," said the woman.

They all stared at her. She was tall, around fifty, with brown hair and large brown eyes. She wore a striking red dress and had kindly features.

"You mean other people have been here to see the display?" asked Amy.

"Just a few minutes ago there was someone," said the woman. "I'm Dr. Nancy Gwinn, by the way. I'm one of the curators here. My specialty is Lewis and Clark, actually."

"Then you're just the person we want to see," said Amy.

"Really, why is that?" asked Dr. Gwinn curiously.

Amy said, "We're students traveling here from out of

town. We're doing a team research paper for a regional competition on Lewis and Clark. There are many things that are known about them, of course. But we were hoping to find out some things that aren't so well-known." She pointed to the display cabinet. "We've covered all of these items in our paper, but do you have any *other* artifacts from the expedition?"

Dr. Gwinn nodded. "Yes, we have many that aren't on display. It's a question of space and interest."

"And there seems to be *interest*," said Amy. "Like you said, someone else was in here asking about them. Was that person my age by any chance? A girl about my height? Blond hair, shoulder length? You see, it's a true competition, and there are college scholarships at stake."

Dr. Gwinn shook her head. "No, she was much older. In her forties. Dark hair, attractive. Very intense. In fact, she seemed familiar to me for some reason."

The four looked at each other. That was undoubtedly Isabel Kabra.

"Was she alone?" asked Dan. "That sounds a lot like one of the teachers who's working with the students we're competing against."

"She *was* alone. But now that you say it, she did seem sort of teacherlike in her demeanor. And she was very articulate."

"I'm sure. Did she ask to see anything out of the ordinary?" asked Amy.

Dr. Gwinn thought for a moment. "Well, just one





thing, now that you mention it. The Lewis and Clark compass. She was quite taken with it."

"Compass," said Amy. She snapped her fingers. "That's right. The famous compass." She looked at the others. "We could use that as one of our centerpiece themes for the research paper."

She turned to look at Dr. Gwinn. "Is there any way we can take a look at it, too?"

Dr. Gwinn shook her head. "She had an appointment. It's the Smithsonian's policy not to bring articles from the back of the building without an appointment."

Amy looked crushed. "She told us we didn't need an appointment when I asked her last week. She's also on the competition's organization committee."

"Well, that's hardly fair," said Dr. Gwinn sternly. "It seems that she was trying to deliberately mislead you."

Amy and Dan said nothing but looked at her hopefully.

Dr. Gwinn said, "If she got to see it, I think you should, too. That's only fair. And one of the Smithsonian's most important missions is to educate and enlighten. Give me a few minutes."

After she walked off, Dan said to Amy, "You get better at lying every day. Should I be worried?"

She smiled. "I'm surprised you weren't worried a long time ago. And look who's talking. 'That sounds like a teacher of the students we're competing against?'"

"Hey, I just go with the flow," replied Dan, grinning.

Atticus added, "But now we know that Isabel was here and she was interested in something about Lewis and Clark."

"You were right, Atticus," said Dan. "Good call on your part."

Nancy Gwinn came back holding a black case. She had put on white gloves. She led them over to a table in a corner, set the case down on it, and opened it.

Dr. Gwinn said in an excited tone, "This is the famous compass of Lewis and Clark. It was actually purchased by Meriwether Lewis around 1803 in preparation for the mission that President Thomas Jefferson was sending them on. When the expedition returned to St. Louis in the fall of 1806, very few of the instruments and equipment they had purchased for the trip had survived. Fortunately, this compass was one of them. It was kept by Clark as a souvenir from the journey. Later he presented the compass to a friend of his. His descendants donated it to the Smithsonian in the early 1930s."

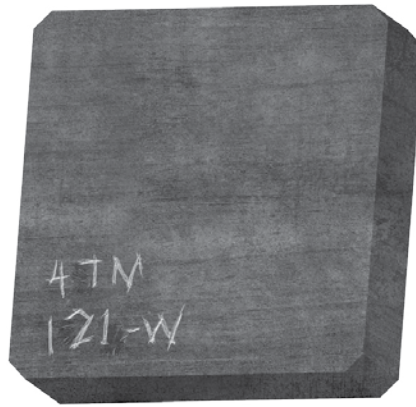
She took it out of the black case. "It cost about five dollars back then. Lewis purchased it from a well-known instrument maker, Thomas Whitney. It has a silver-plated brass rim and the box is mahogany. It also has a leather carrying case. It's a very handsome piece."

Amy and the others crowded around for a better look, but none of them could see anything helpful in the object.

On a cue from Amy, Jake and Dan used their cell-phone cameras to take shots of the compass.



Amy said, "Can we see the bottom of the box?"  
"Funny," said Dr. Gwinn. "That woman asked the very same thing."



She turned it over, and Jake and Dan surreptitiously took photos of it with their phones.

Amy leaned closer to look at the box. She said, "Is that writing on there?"

Dr. Gwinn looked more closely. "Yes. It seems to be a

series of numbers scratched into the surface, although it's been worn down over the years, of course. No one has ever been able to figure out what they mean. It was probably just a notation that either Lewis or Clark made during their journey. And the wooden case made a handy place to do so, I imagine."

Amy glanced at Dan. They both knew that Lewis and Clark had been members of the Tomas branch of the Cahills. The Tomas were known for their stubbornness and the fires in their bellies. They had landed men on the moon, and Lewis and Clark had fought their way to the Pacific coast. Amy doubted that they would have scratched some meaningless numbers into the back of a compass box that William Clark had made sure would survive over the centuries.

Dan said, "Did the woman write the numbers down?"

Dr. Gwinn glanced at him strangely. "Why, yes, she did."

"Thanks so much," said Amy. "You've been a big help."

"In fact, we almost had a disaster," added Dr. Gwinn.

"A disaster?" asked Amy. "What do you mean?"

Dr. Gwinn looked chagrined. "It was my fault, really. I shouldn't have let that woman hold the compass. She dropped it. It bounced under the display case over there. But she was able to get under the table and retrieve it. I checked it over. There was no damage, thank goodness."



Amy and Dan looked at each other but said nothing.

As they turned to leave Dr. Gwinn said, "You all were a lot nicer than she was. I hope you win your competition."

Amy and Dan turned back and together said, "Me, too."





COMMON  
CORE  
ALIGNED

## DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the  
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

### Dear Book Club Host:

We've teamed up with our allies at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History to create an exciting virtual field trip called **Decoding History**. Join renowned author (and top Cahill agent) David Baldacci as he takes students on a special, behind-the-scenes look at important artifacts from U.S. history, including the Lewis and Clark compass featured in David Baldacci's book, *Cahills vs. Vespers: Day of Doom*. Be sure to visit [scholastic.com/decodinghistory](http://scholastic.com/decodinghistory) to start the adventure with your club members, if you haven't already.

This month's activities are inspired by the webcast and have been designed with the ELA Common Core State Standards in mind—with a The 39 Clues twist, of course. History's greatest stories are waiting for your intrepid Cahill minds.

### Activity 1: Curator or Detective?

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **Curator or Detective?** handout so there are copies for every club member. 2) You will need a computer with internet access to screen the virtual field trip and for student research. 3) Supply pens, crayons, and markers for club members.

This activity asks Cahills to investigate artifacts featured in the **Decoding History** virtual field trip. Watch the webcast, and then read the **Curator or Detective?** handout aloud to the group. Ask club members to conduct research and prepare their own accounts of famous artifacts in U.S. history. In order to fulfill writing standards 2 and 7, club members should cite evidence in their informative pieces from both the webcast and their independent research.

When club members are done, you might choose to cover speaking and listening standards by inviting members to report their findings in the fashion of the virtual field trip. If available, use a video camera to record each student's account and to make your own videos showcasing the famous artifacts.

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.

## Activity 2: Code Creators

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **Code Creators** handout for each club member. 2) Prior to the club meeting, tell club members to bring in a personal object or come prepared to talk about an object that someone five hundred years from now might need to know about in order to understand the 21st century.

Invite club members to share their personal artifacts with the group. Then distribute the **Code Creators** handout. Each club member should draw his or her object in the box provided, then write a note explaining its significance. Keep in mind that in five hundred years, people might not understand things like cell phones, so club members should give specific details about how an object is used. To address writing standard 2 for explanatory texts, club members should introduce their topic, elaborate using facts and examples, include key vocabulary words that relate to their objects, and end with a concluding statement.

Then, just like David Drake did with his pottery, ask club members to use the code suggestions below to leave a secret message on their object. If time permits, divide club members into groups to swap papers and call on their Cahill training to crack the codes.

- A number might correspond with a letter of the alphabet (1=A, 2=B, 3=C, and so on)
- A letter could represent a different letter in the alphabet (“Bnz boe Ebo” means “Amy and Dan”)
- Individual words can be written backward (“IlihaC” means “Cahill”) or an entire message might be written backward (“srepseV eht potS” means “Stop the Vespers.”)

## Activity 3: Family History Journal

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Make copies of the **Family History Journal** handout for each club member. 2) Gather supplies like glue, scissors, and stickers, as well as notebooks or paper for making the journals. (See below.)

Every family has a story to tell, whether it’s the secret tale of hiding a Clue in the Paris catacombs, or the account of a relative’s journey to America. Ask club members to explore their own past and create history journals to document their family’s legacy. Club members can use the space on the handout to brainstorm items they might add to their journals—an important part of the planning process, which aligns to writing standard 5. Then, using oral interviews and primary sources, club members can write short narrative pieces in their journals that address writing standards 3 and 7.

Have club members create their own journals by using bound notebooks or by folding sheets of construction paper in half and stapling them together. Because a family history is an ongoing process, be sure to leave extra pages at the end. If you want to go paperless and create interactive journals, club members can use PowerPoint or a secure online scrapbook website in order to meet writing standard 6.

Once club members finish their journals, invite families to a celebration honoring family history. Host a small gathering during which members present their journals—a fun way to practice speaking and listening skills.

### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.

## Activity 4: How Do You View History?

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **How Do You View History?** handout, making enough copies for every club member. 2) Have extra paper and plenty of pencils available for every club member. 3) You'll need a computer or interactive whiteboard with internet access to watch the virtual field trip.

Replay the section of the virtual field trip about Lincoln's pocket watch at [www.scholastic.com/decodinghistory](http://www.scholastic.com/decodinghistory). Instruct club members to pay careful attention to the story about the secret inscription. To support speaking and listening standards 1 and 2, have club members work with a partner to paraphrase the story of the watch.

As a group, discuss the differences between a primary source and a secondary source. A **primary source** is a firsthand original account, record, or evidence about a person, place, object, or event. A **secondary source** is an account, record, or evidence derived from an original or primary source or sources. (Harry Rubenstein's discussion of Lincoln's watch in the virtual field trip is a secondary source.)

Ask club members to brainstorm ideas about what primary sources Harry Rubenstein might have used when preparing his account of the watch. Who would be able to give a firsthand, original account about the pocket watch and be considered a primary source? Then distribute and read the **How Do You View History?** handout, which features a record of a newspaper article and an image of Lincoln's pocket watch. The article, from the April 30, 1906 edition of *The New York Times*, shares the watchmaker's account about the story, making it a primary source. However, the actual watch is also a primary source.

Have club members analyze the similarities and differences between these two primary sources to gather information about what really happened. Highlight how important it is for historians to look at multiple perspectives as one person may not have all the details of a given event, or may get information wrong (like the watchmaker's memory of the inscription wording). The ability to analyze these documents is an important skill addressed in reading standard 6 and reading in history/social studies standards 6 and 9. For more information about teaching with primary sources, visit <http://historyexplorer.si.edu/teacher>.

In support of writing standards 3 and 8, use extra paper to have club members participate in a bonus activity by writing their own narrative accounts of an event they all experienced together, like a recent assembly, the first day of class, or a first club meeting. They should cite at least five facts. Have the group share their firsthand accounts and notice how each account will have a different perspective. Most of the time, these perspectives will just include different details depending on who is speaking, but sometimes, like in the case of the watchmaker, one person's memory is wrong. Like Harry Rubenstein, the museum curator, club members will need to consult multiple sources of information (primary sources whenever available) in order to get the most complete version of what really happened.

### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.



### Common Core State Standards:

The activities in this month's reading club support the following Common Core anchor standards:

	Reading	Writing	Speaking and Listening	Reading in History/Social Studies (grades 6-8)
<b>Activity 1: Analyzing Artifacts</b>	1, 7	2, 7	2, 4, 5	1, 7
<b>Activity 2: Code Creators</b>		2	1	
<b>Activity 3: Family History Journal</b>		3, 5, 6, 7	1, 4, 5	
<b>Activity 4: How Do You View History?</b>	6	3, 8	1, 2	6, 9

**Bonus:** Looking for extra practice with **text-dependent questions** to meet the rigors of Common Core? Click [HERE](http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Excerpt) (<http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Excerpt>) to download an excerpt from *Cahills vs. Vespers: Day of Doom* in which Amy and Dan visit the Smithsonian to see the Lewis and Clark compass. You can also access an audio excerpt [HERE](http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Audio) (<http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Audio>). Then have club members answer the discussion questions that follow by digging through the text and virtual field trip for evidence.

- In this excerpt from the book, we haven't met Isabel Kabra, but we can get a sense of her character based on what Amy, Dan, and the other says about her. Using clues in the text, describe Isabel's character traits. (RL.3)
- What can you infer about the "competition" that Amy and Dan speak about? What evidence in the text helped you come to this conclusion? (RL.1)
- Compare and contrast how information about the Lewis and Clark compass is presented in the excerpt and in the virtual field trip. (RL.9, RI.9)

Thanks for joining us on this adventure. Until next time—keep on discovering history!

—The 39 Clues Book Club

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

**scholastic.com/the39clues**



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.



## DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the  
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

### Activity 1: Curator or Detective?

Artifacts are objects left behind by people who came before us. In *The 39 Clues*, Amy and Dan often use artifacts to discover secrets about their family's past, or to help in their fight against the Vespers. In the virtual trip to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, expert curators told you about important historical artifacts, such as Lewis and Clark's compass and Lincoln's pocket watch. Now it's your turn to be an expert!

Visit the Smithsonian's History Explorers site at [historyexplorer.si.edu/artifacts](http://historyexplorer.si.edu/artifacts). Browse their collection to find your favorite artifact in U.S. history. You might choose one connected to *The 39 Clues*, such as the Morse telegraph register or Edison's light bulb.

Read all about your artifact on the Smithsonian site and at least one other reliable source. Then write a description of your artifact below—just as the curators presented their artifacts in the virtual field trip.

#### Artifact Account

What It Is: \_\_\_\_\_

Who Used It: \_\_\_\_\_

When It Was Used: \_\_\_\_\_

How It Was Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Why It Is Important: \_\_\_\_\_

Is This Object Useful Today? Why or Why Not? \_\_\_\_\_

Print a picture of your artifact and paste it below, or sketch the artifact yourself.

**BONUS:** Pretend to be an expert curator. Present your artifact to the club—and ask a quiz question just like in the virtual field trip!

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

**[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)**



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.



## DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the  
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

### Activity 2: Code Creators

Do you think Mozart knew people would be studying his letters hundreds of years after his death? Would Amelia Earhart know that her leather jacket would become a prized possession? Imagine life in America five hundred years from now. What kinds of artifacts from today will people find interesting in the future? What will the item teach them about the 21st century?

Choose a personal belonging (e.g., trophy, cell phone, or baseball card collection) that people would want to know about in the year 2513. Draw your object below.

Now, write a note to the person who finds the object, explaining what it is and why it's important to you and your life today.

---

---

---

---

In the virtual field trip, you learned that regular people like David Drake left behind secret messages that influenced history. Now it's your turn. What do you want people to know about your object and its importance? Create a coded message to be written on your artifact. Your club host will have some ideas about how to create a code.

---

---

**BONUS:** Trade papers with fellow club members. See if they can use their code-cracking skills to figure out your secret message. If you think they're trustworthy, you can give them hints about how to crack the code!

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.



## DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the  
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

### Activity 3: Family History Journal

Like the Cahills, every family has a story to tell. Keep a family history journal that you can pass down from generation to generation. Use this page to start gathering items for your journal, but be sure to interview family members. Within your journal, write short narrative pieces about some of your favorite family memories.

#### Memories

Make a list of important memories from your family history. You might include weddings, birthdays, special accomplishments, places you've lived, and trips you've taken.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Tell the Story

Pick one of the memories above, and write a short journal entry about it. Include details about when and where it took place and who was in attendance.

---

---

---

---

#### Collect Objects

Use this checklist to help collect items or pictures of items to paste into your journal. You may wish to include some everyday items, such as a picture of your favorite sneakers, so your descendants will understand what life was like in 2013. Include a short entry to describe each object:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family photos                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Greeting cards from special occasions        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket stubs from events         | <input type="checkbox"/> Brochures from family trips                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of awards or certificates | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper clippings featuring family members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                 |

**BONUS:** Design a family crest—just like those from each branch of the Cahill family. Decide what colors, shapes, and symbols reflect your family. Make sure to include your family name(s) at the bottom! Cut out the crest and paste it on the cover of your journal.

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.

## DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the  
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

### Activity 4: How Do You View History?

As Amy and Dan know from the hunt for The 39 Clues, there can be many different versions of the same historical event. In *The Maze of Bones*, for instance, the siblings learn a very different account of Benjamin Franklin's time in Paris—a discovery that helps them find a hidden Clue.

Often, the most useful information about a historical event comes from someone who was there. Read the article to the right, which is a primary source about the watchmaker's account of Lincoln's watch and its inscription. Then, analyze the image of the watch interior itself, which is also a primary source. (See below or go to <http://tinyurl.com/smithsonian-watch>.)

Discuss similarities and differences between the two perspectives of the event. How do you know if a source is trustworthy? What other information would you want in order to determine an accurate version of the story?



Photo credit:  
National Museum of  
American History

#### WHO HAS LINCOLN'S WATCH?

He Will Be Interested In This Story of  
the 84-Year-Old Juror.

Among the jurors serving in the Supreme Court last week was one 84 years young. He said so himself. He looks and acts just as young as he says he feels. This man is Jonathan Dillon of 46 West 117th Street. He has been engaged in the watchmaking business for the best part of seventy-four years.

Mr. Dillon, who has a remarkable memory and an interesting fund of reminiscence, tells a new story which has to do with Abraham Lincoln.

"When the civil war broke out," said Mr. Dillon, "I was in the employ of M. W. Galt & Co. on Pennsylvania Avenue, near Seventh Street, in Washington. I was the only Union sympathizer working in the shop.

"I was working upstairs when Mr. Galt came up. He was very much excited, and gasped:

"Dillon, war has begun; the first shot has been fired."

"At that moment I had in my hand Abraham Lincoln's watch, which I had been repairing. It was a gold, hunting case, English lever watch. The late John Hay told me afterward that it was the first watch Mr. Lincoln ever owned.

"I was in the act of screwing on the dial when Mr. Galt announced the news. I unscrewed the dial, and with a sharp instrument wrote on the metal beneath:

"The first gun is fired. Slavery is dead. Thank God we have a President who at least will try."

"Then I signed my name and the date. So far as I know, no one but myself ever saw the inscription, and I do not know into whose hands Mr. Lincoln's watch fell at his death."

Mr. Dillon was born in the City of Waterford, Ireland, where his ancestors had been watchmakers for generations.

"I have newspapers," he said, "containing my father's and grandfather's advertisements back 150 years. I was never out of work for twenty-four hours at a time until I retired."

"How long ago was that?" the old watchmaker was asked.

"Well, I wouldn't like to admit that I have quit yet," was the reply. "My eyes are not as good as they were once, but they are still as good as those of any one I know. When I was younger I frequently amazed friends by standing on Jersey City Heights and reading signs in Manhattan. My friends often accused me of locating and learning them before I crossed the river, but that was not the case. I could actually read them at that distance."

The law does not oblige a citizen to serve as a juror after he is 70 years old. Mr. Dillon rather enjoys the work.

**BONUS:** For a better understanding of multiple perspectives, work together to pick an event all club members experienced together, like the first day of class or first club meeting. Write your own personal account of the event, citing at least five facts such as date, place, etc. Then as a group share your individual recollections—you'll be amazed at the differences in primary accounts of the same event! Work together to document the most accurate account, taking into consideration all perspectives. You're on your way to becoming a historian!

#### REPRODUCIBLE

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

**scholastic.com/the39clues**

**SCHOLASTIC**

THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.





**REPRODUCIBLE**

The contents of this page may be photocopied and distributed for educational purposes, as long as it's free of charge.

**[scholastic.com/the39clues](http://scholastic.com/the39clues)**



THE 39 CLUES and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. Illustration by SJI Associates.